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ABSTRACT

A handbook designed to explain the educational approach and outcomes of a year-long arts program which integrated art gallery tours with poetry writing is divided into four sections. Section 1, "Abstracts of the Evaluation" presents an overview of the philosophy of the program, background and organization, the participatory gallery tour which forms a fundamental part of the program, art in the classroom activities, poetry exercises, project evaluation, and recommendations. Section 2, "Lesson Plans and Related Poetry" contains two classroom art lessons and four gallery poetry lessons as well as sample student poems, all related to the Marvin Harden exhibit. A third section presents additional student poetry inspired by the Frederick S. Wright exhibition, while a final section contains sample student and program evaluation questionnaires.
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Poetry in the Gallery

Introducing Poetry through the Visual Arts

A Handbook for Educators

Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery

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Poetry in the Gallery

Introducing Poetry through
the Visual Arts

A Handbook for Educators

Edited by
Anita Getzler
Kim Kanatani

City of Los Angeles, Cultural Affairs Department
Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery
at Barnsdall Park

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All drawings reproduced in this Handbook
were by students participating in this
project.

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Anita Getzler

Project Director
Education Coordinator
Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery

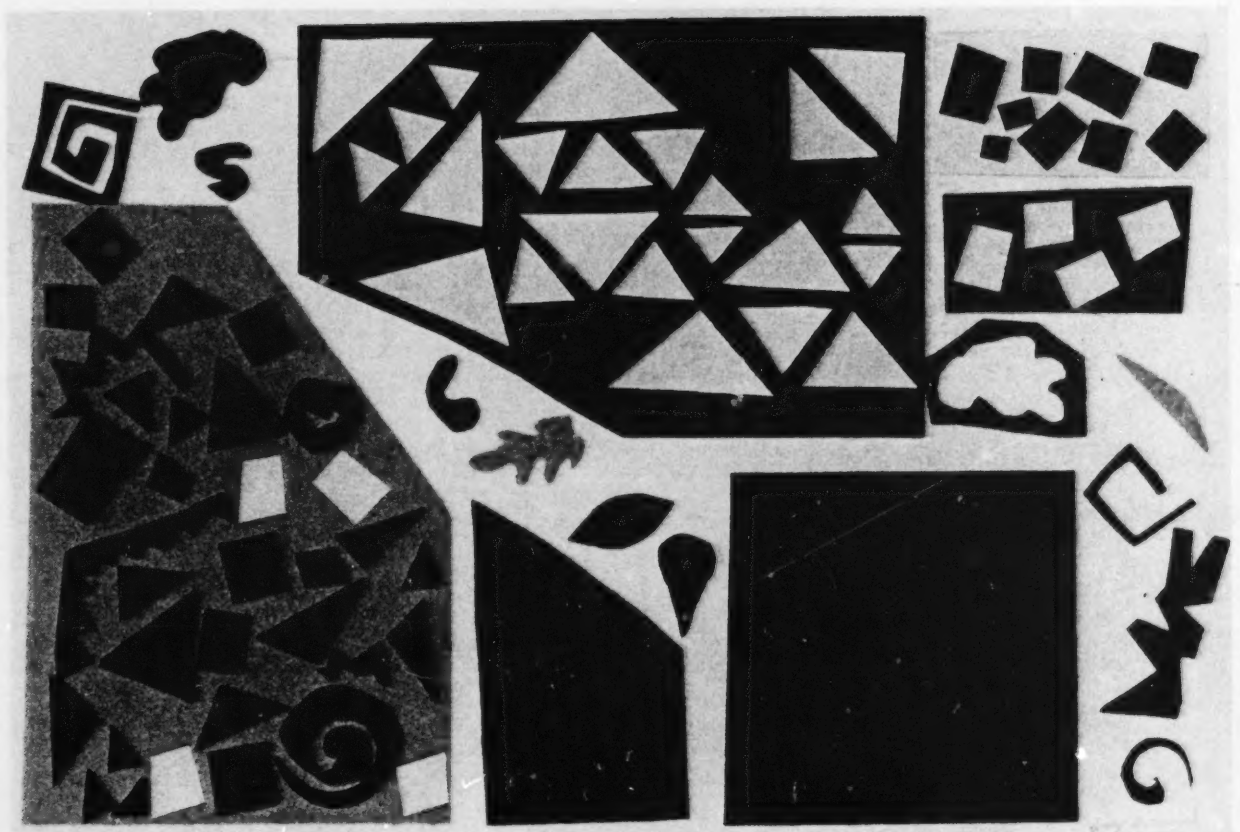
PREFACE

This handbook is designed to explain the educational approach and outcomes of an interrelated arts program, "Poetry in the Gallery." This year-long gallery-school collaborative was based on an approach to viewing art through the Participatory Group Tour that had been tried and found successful within the programs of the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery for the past six years. Its forerunner, a year-long pilot project with one gifted class from Los Feliz Elementary School, further developed the methods of incorporating poetry into the visual arts program.

The handbook is a compilation of information that presents an educational point of view, offers ideas for its implementation, and contains student poetry and drawings as well as an abstract of the final evaluation of the Project. We hope that it affords some insights into an undertaking of this nature as well as some practical suggestions for adapted programming. Copies of the final evaluation are available upon request for \$7.50. Call (213) 485-4581 or write to Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery, 4804 Hollywood Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90027.

Anita Getzler

Abstract
of the
Evaluation



Jenny Sherwood
Sixth Grade

Poetry in the Gallery

Geraldine Dimondstein
*California State University
Los Angeles, California*

Anita Getzler
*Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery
Los Angeles, California*

Thirty-five children are scattered throughout the Gallery in twos and threes or sometimes alone. The quiet murmur of voices in many languages can be heard. Heads bob up and down, eyes peer intently at the images on the gallery walls; the children wait for thoughts to form and hastily record them. Some lean against the walls in cross-legged postures, others sprawl on the carpeted floor as the poet quietly moves from one to another, answering questions and making suggestions: "Focus on one painting and ask yourself, 'What is the mood and how is the imagination of the painter conveyed in this image? What did the artist do to make me feel that?' Think about your discussion last week, about lines, shapes, color, texture, movement and brushstroke."

The students respond in poetry:

A BORING DAY

Thick as a globby
lake or a thick
forest. Walking
through crackling
leaves, like walking
through a bowl of
corn flakes without
milk. You look like
chewed-up mint
bubble gum on the
damp dirt ground.
I want to pick you
up and mold you into
clay. You are cool and
fresh on hot summer
days. You have lines
on your side that
were made with
a tip of a golden
star.

By Stephanie Smith, Fourth Grade

THE PASSAGE TO DEATH

My imagination tells me death is coming.
Doomsday in a dead river
flowing until it stops and dies out.
My imagination seems to say, "Come into my passage."
But in that deep dark passage
is the fatigued feeling of death.
The rough black is demolishing and jagged,
smoggy gray seems to choke and lead me in.
The thickly smooth texture seems to say something
as it slowly gets smaller and smaller.

By Anthony Prado, Sixth Grade

The concept of responding to one art form through another is not a novel idea. Examples include literature-inspired music in Bizet's score to the novel, *Carmen*, by Prosper Merimée; painting-inspired poetry in William Carlos Williams' poems, *Pictures from Breughel*; and music-inspired dance in Paul Taylor's *Esplanade* with music by Bach. Introducing the relationship of art and poetry to elementary school children taps a vast resource familiar to artists past and present. This inter-relationship is based on some challenging speculations. First, although the process is not identical, both words and visual forms evoke sensory images; therefore, as students read, write, or listen to poetry, they visualize objects, situations, or thoughts. Second, emotional connections are made when attitudes and feelings are brought to bear upon combinations of words, just as they are to the expressive content of images.¹ These forms "come alive" for students through their personal engagement and their capacity to make metaphoric connections.

This article documents and reports evaluation of the Poetry in the Gallery project, in which fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students related poetic expression to visual forms. Conducted by the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery, the project was sponsored by a grant from the Institute of Museum Services.

At the outset, responses to a questionnaire revealed that seventeen languages were spoken at home, the predominant being English, followed by Spanish, Armenian, and Chinese.

Background

As a division of the Cultural Affairs Department of the City of Los Angeles, the Municipal Art Gallery (MAG) is part of a cultural complex in Barnsdall Park. It is situated in an economically diverse, multi-ethnic, multi-lingual community in Hollywood, amidst neighborhoods of predominantly Latino, Armenian, Asian, and Anglo populations. Its 10,000-square-foot flexible space is divided into two galleries presenting a series of sixteen changing exhibitions a year. Founded in 1971, the Gallery is committed to showcasing the work of contemporary Southern California artists within an ongoing education program.

The MAG education staff had been working with the concept of poetry in the gallery since 1978, incorporating group poems in tours for children and adults. (A group poem is a collective effort in which each tour participant anonymously contributes one written line in response to a visual image.) The concept was formalized in 1980 when the education coordinator initiated a pilot program in a neighborhood elementary school. Throughout the school year, a class of gifted, multi-ethnic fourth, fifth, and sixth graders participated in monthly exhibition tours. The students also met in weekly classroom sessions with a designated teacher to discuss art and poetry related to each exhibition. The vital quality of the poetry produced in response to the art works and the students' enthusiasm for the interrelated process suggested that a more in-depth investigation might produce valuable results.

Conceived and directed by the education coordinator of the MAG, the Poetry in the Gallery project was conducted in two elementary schools from November 1981 through May 1982. A population of 250 students, representing two fourth grades, two fifth grades, and four sixth grades was drawn equally from both schools. What was most surprising was the extent of the students' polylingual diversity. At the outset, responses to a questionnaire revealed that seventeen languages were spoken at home, the predominant being English, followed by Spanish, Armenian, and Chinese.

Students participated once a week, in a four-week program related to each exhibition presented at the MAG. They first visited the Gallery and in groups of



Untitled Image - In the Gap of Passage P: viii, painting by Marvin Harden, 1981

Harden's painting provided inspiration for children involved in the Poetry in the Gallery project. Students were encouraged to translate their responses to the visual forms into poetry. (Courtesy of Douglas M. Parker Studio, Los Angeles)

approximately twelve students, participated in a one-hour tour with either the art educator or a gallery tour guide. Two art educators, who had previously participated in the pilot project, were each assigned four classes in which they conducted a one and one-half hour follow-up lesson. Two poets were selected by the project director (MAG's educational director) from the Poetry in the Schools Program, sponsored by the California Arts Council. Each was assigned four classes that met bimonthly for one and one-half hours on alternating weeks with the art educator. Poetry sessions were held in the gallery space as scheduling allowed in order to effect a closer relationship of particular art works to poetic imagery. Poets and art educators met consistently with

Physical activities encouraged the involvement of all students and helped to overcome initial inhibitions and language barriers.

the same classes, and all observed the same exhibitions. An example of a typical month's schedule for each class follows:

Exhibition: MARVIN HARDEN
Paintings and Drawings
1961-1981

Event	Leader
Week 1: Gallery Tour	Art Educator or Tour Guide
Week 2: Poetry in the Gallery	Poet
Week 3: Art in the Classroom	Art Educator
Week 4: Poetry in the Classroom	Poet

This project offered a model of a two-fold collaborative venture — one, between the MAG and the public schools, the other, between art educators and poets. The two elementary schools were selected on the basis of their physical proximity to the Gallery and the philosophical and programmatic support from school principals. By utilizing schools within walking distance, the project bypassed the burden of transportation costs and insured participation by the cultural and ethnic range of students in the immediate community.

Organization

Interested teachers were selected from among several fourth, fifth, and sixth grades in these schools by each school principal. The teachers' commitment to the import of the arts in personal development and in their curriculum was essential to maintain an ongoing gallery program confronted with the inevitable time and curriculum pressures of public school teaching. Initially, eight teachers met in the Gallery with the project director, art educators, and poets to become familiar with the space, the general project goals, and the particular procedures of the group tour. Such workshops were scheduled for periodic program review and guidance in teaching visual literacy and poetry. The intent was to help teachers make connections between their own curricula and the project.

Teachers' involvement reflected their interest in the arts and their enthusiasm for sharing it with students. As one poet stated, "The teacher's attentiveness is a model to the class that poetry is something *she* wants to learn and,

therefore, she sets a tone." Although the teacher was to be present at all sessions and to assist as necessary, responses varied. Some passively observed, others helped their students directly (especially in the large group sessions), and some offered relevant information to the educators or mediated in discipline problems. Many wrote poetry alongside their students that was included in classroom hand-outs. Follow-up ideas for the classroom were shared informally between educators and interested teachers.

To integrate art and poetry effectively, the program was designed for consistency in the structure and content of lessons presented by the educators. A project of this complexity required a coherent philosophical outlook while allowing for a diversity of teaching styles. Art educators, poets, and gallery tour guides met every six weeks in "brain-storming" sessions at which the participants discussed and analyzed each new exhibition and planned corresponding strategies for gallery and classroom experiences.

The Gallery Tour

The MAG has incorporated the participatory tour as a model approach, and its prior success established the precedent for this project. By guiding students in small groups through a process of inquiry, and by generating curiosity and developing critical judgments, this approach facilitates learning. Through dialogue, role playing, use of selected sensory modes in movement, music, and poetry, students made connections between their life experiences and the visual experiences in the art work.

Upon arriving at the Gallery, students participated in structured "warm-ups" relating to themes or emotional qualities of the exhibition. For example, movement explorations were one means of relating body movement to the visual elements in an art form. Physical activities encouraged the involvement of all students and helped to overcome initial inhibitions and language barriers. For example, in relating to Marvin Harden's work, the art educator focused on the concept of mood.

ART EDUCATOR (AE):

What does the word "mood" mean?



Students tour the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery's annual "Magical Mystery Tour" with art educator Kim Kanatani as their tour guide

Ms. Kanatani uses the participatory tour approach to involve the students with the art through dialogue, role playing, movement, music, poetry, and games. In the "elements hunt" game, shown above, students are presented with cards on which are printed key words, like texture, mood, rhythm, depth. The students are instructed to find the works of art that best illustrate the words on the cards and then to justify their choice.

(Courtesy of Nancy Bercovitz, Pasadena, California)

STUDENTS (STS):

The way you feel . . . Like a happy or sad mood . . .
Or if you feel in a bad mood . . . A lonely or angry mood.

AE: What are the different ways we can tell what mood someone is in?

STS: If they're smiling, they're in a good mood . . . By the things they say . . . If they're crying.

AE: Now let's see if by using our bodies, and without using our faces, we can take the *shape* of being sad. How are you using different parts of your body to express sadness?

STS: My head is tucked in . . . My arms are holding me . . . My shoulders are dropped . . . I'm hunched over . . . I'm crunched up like a ball.

AE: Where are you in space? Are you using a lot of space? A little space? Are you reaching out for space? Is it an open or closed space?

STS: I'm holding the space . . . It's a closed space . . . Only a little space . . . I'm not reaching out.

AE: So, you've expressed a mood without using words or facial expressions. You did it through the shape of your bodies in space. Well, the artist can also express mood, but he or she does it through the relationship of the lines, shapes, colors, and images in the art work.

The tour discussion that followed focused on developing concepts and vocabulary related to particular art works in terms of the following: *thematic content*, for example, fantasy, loneliness, humor; and *decisions of the artist*, for example, subject matter, media, composition. Questions were posed such as "What does the artist show you or make you feel about this particular scene or environment?" "How would it feel to be inside of that painting, photograph, sculpture?" Key concepts such as "mood," "imagination," "style," as expressed through line, color, shape, and texture were considered.

AE: Sometimes by their choice of colors and shapes, and the way they apply the paint, artists can make an image feel like it's calm or active. Which of the images that you see here feels calm and peaceful rather than active and energetic?

STS: That one, because it has light colors in it . . . The colors are almost the same . . . They blend into each other . . . They seem quiet . . . He put his brush strokes in one direction . . . They're not jumping around, so they seem calm.

AE: Can you find one image that feels active and energetic?

STS: That one. He made it rough. Also, the color . . . he put a lot of brighter, different colors that stand out against each other. He put a lot of lines through the brush strokes . . . They're not just going up and down, they're going in "zig-zaggie" directions. He put a lot of bumps of paint all crowded together.

The context was set by one poet's comment, "That's why we're in a gallery, so you can use your eyes and take in what you see and think of special words for it."

AE: What is he creating with those bumps of paint?

STS: Texture.

AE: Right. The texture is very bumpy. What else about this painting makes it energetic?

STS: He used bright colors and they're all in different directions. They flick in and out . . . It's like a wave that hit on something.

The relationship between visual and written language was reinforced through activities such as the "elements hunt." Students in twos or threes were given cards with words such as texture, mood, rhythm, and depth with the instructions: "Imagine you're detectives and that your assignment is to find the picture that best shows the word on your card." Students were then asked to justify their choices.

STS: *Depth* is important because he put one thing in the foreground and then in the back it looked like everything was small. He wanted to make that one thing important.

STS: I chose this one for *repetition* because he repeated lines, rectangles, squares . . . I chose the same one because the repeating lines make *patterns*.

AE: How does the pattern guide your eyes around the drawing?

STS: From the back and around here.

Art in the Classroom

In these follow-up sessions students experienced their own creative process through "hands-on" explorations and slide discussions related to each exhibition. The Harden exhibition focused on the theme of artists working in serial images. After viewing and discussing slides of Andy Warhol's *Photo of Warhol with Silkscreen* and Piet Mondrian's *Red Tree*, *Blue Tree*, and *Gray Tree*, students were asked to "select either a favorite object, an abstract shape, or a realistic shape. Draw it four different ways, changing the 'personality' or 'mood' of the image each time. You can change the form of your subject by making

it more abstract or realistic, or you can repeat the subject using different colors to suggest various mood qualities." Alternating gallery and classroom visits reinforced previous gallery discussions and prepared students for subsequent exhibitions. Students kept portfolios throughout the year.

Poetry in the Gallery

During the second week of each exhibition, students met as a group with the poet in the Gallery. Initial activities, comparable to "warm-ups," oriented students to a particular exhibition and prepared them for writing. To establish a casual environment for more intimate dialogue, students sat in a circle on the floor. The context was set by one poet's comment, "That's why we're in a gallery, so you can use your eyes and take in what you see and think of special words for it."

POET: When you look at these paintings, what do you see that makes them a series?

STS: Rectangles . . . The tree in the middle . . . They all have a full color in back of them . . . It looks like they all have cement in the background, or whatever that is . . . 'Cause it feel rough . . . The colors sort of go together.

POET: What kind of verbs might you use to describe what's happening to the center rectangle?

STS: It's falling down, the black makes it thick and globby . . . It's sinking in dirt . . . It looks like it's being pumped up.

As in the tours, discussions focused on concepts and vocabulary: *concepts* regarding the thought processes that motivate poetry, for example, imagination, moods, feelings, and *vocabulary* created through the selection of words, their sounds and rhythms, and their grouping into patterns. Guidelines were given for observing an exhibition and for writing. Students working alone or in twos or threes were encouraged to share their perceptions with each other and the poets. Occasionally, words such as texture, thickness, strokes, movement, line, color, shape, and contrast, previously used on tours in relation

to visual images, were written on large sheets of paper and referred to in this context to suggest parallels in poetic language. Sessions concluded with writing poetry under the poet's guidance.

POET: Remember we were talking about imagination? I want you to pick one painting and look at all these qualities we talked about and figure out what the mood is for you. What things in the painting give you that mood? Then write about what it feels like for you. What is this hole? Is it a window or door or a passage through the mind like Ethan was saying? I want you to use the painting and the *mood* of the painting to write your poems.

THE LAST WAY

Like the end of the world
Nothing else to live for
No breeze. No life except for people
who have managed to survive.

The sun is now a
dark rusty color
The sky a light deadening force
Only one entrance out of
the dying world
The way lies below the swamps
Where a force lives to kill.

The sun slowly falling never to
be seen again.
Only evidence remains
ruins that were once beautiful.

The world is doomed
soon just a black star lost
in space.

By Jenny Sherwood, Sixth Grade

Poetry in the Classroom

Classroom lessons were designed to help students give poetic structure to language inspired by the visual images seen in the Gallery and by their own personal experi-



A student participating in the MAG "Magical Mystery Tour" ponders a particularly evocative form

Students met with the poet in the gallery and were instructed to look at vocabulary in the art, such as texture, thickness, strokes, movement, line, color, shape, and contrast. Sessions concluded with their writing poetry inspired by both the mood of the art and its physical elements. (Courtesy of Nancy Bercovitz, Pasadena, California)

ences. To accommodate the various levels of literacy, the poets' procedures for the students included: listening, reading, and discussing their own and adult poems; dictating ideas for group poems that they recorded in their notebooks; writing individual poems in response to an exhibition or to a poetic structure suggested by the poet. Each student kept a poetry folder.

One lesson plan introduced "the concept of rhythm in poetry to promote novel language." The idea of series (introduced with the Harden exhibition) was reinforced, but in this case it was applied to poetry through the use of

In assessing the visual arts as a source of poetry, both poets held that poetry is not intended to mirror visual images, but that such images may evoke associations with students' personal experiences.

repetition and variations in language. Poems were read aloud in order to identify how rhythm in writing can be conveyed through the accents of syllables or through whole phrases. Andre Breton's "Freedom of Love" and Vicente Huidobro's "Serenade of Laughing Life" were used to illustrate rhythmic qualities. Students were asked to "pick one thing or person that you have strong feelings for — someone or something you love, or perhaps are afraid of, or maybe someone or something you feel angry towards. Write a poem about that person or thing using repetitive phrasing."

My bike with
wheels of a
one million
horsepower dragster
With handlebars of
melted lightning
My bike with the
cranks
which
have the code
of the gods
With the frame of
bursting
light
My bike with a path
leading through
other
galaxies
With the rider
that
is more
powerful
than the whole
galactic empire
My bike with the
power to
conquer
everything
that
ever
moved

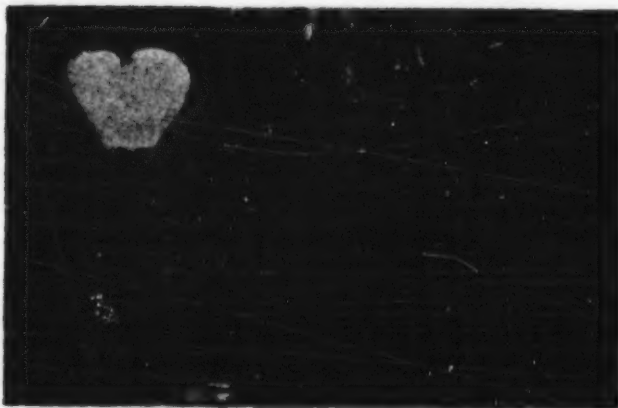
By Tim Franks, Sixth Grade

Evaluations

An evaluation of the project was based on Stake's "responsive evaluation" approach, which offers an alternative to quantifying data that is more appropriately reported in qualitative terms.² Documentation was drawn from both objective and subjective sources: (1) lesson plans prepared by art educators and poets; (2) journal notes written by art educators and poets after each class meeting; (3) transcripts of art and poetry sessions; (4) student poetry compiled from mimeographed copies of group and individual poems; (5) art work selected from each grade level; and (6) questionnaires from teachers, students, poets, and art educators. This data was then compiled by an outside evaluator hired at the outset of the project.³ The findings offered several issues for consideration, namely: criteria for assessing student work, the viability of using visual forms as a source of poetry, the Gallery as an environment in stimulating poetic expression, evidence for which students reap the greatest benefits from such a program, and the feasibility of conducting such a program with a predominance of English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) students. These issues, evaluated by the poets, art educators, teachers, and students are presented below.

Poet educators' criteria for assessing the quality of the students' poetry were based on two fundamental considerations: the linguistic diversity of the students in terms of their initial skills and the structural and expressive qualities of their poetry. The most significant criteria were *language* (vocabulary) and *structure*, that is, original and particularized language revealing an individual personality or "voice." The poet educators encouraged word combinations that challenged convention in sound and imagery and a compression and terseness of rhythm that distinguished poetry from prose. Coherence achieved by integrating content, language, and mood was deemed the most sophisticated quality.

In assessing the visual arts as a source of poetry, both poets held that poetry is not intended to mirror visual images, but that such images may evoke associations with students' personal experiences. One poet stated, "My goal was to use the images in the gallery as a way of teaching the children to use their real, tangible percep-



Pastel on paper, by Juliet Cleere, sixth grade

As a follow-up to artist Marvin Harden's exhibition, classroom exercises focused on the theme of artists working in serial images. After viewing and discussing slides of Andy Warhol's *Photo of Warhol with Silkscreen* and Piet Mondrian's *Red Tree*, *Blue Tree*, and *Gray Tree*, students were asked to "select either a favorite object, an abstract shape, or a realistic shape. Draw it four different ways, changing the 'personality' or 'mood' of the image each time."

(Courtesy of Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery)

tions as sources for their own creative writing." Both observed that students tended to make the art work the source of their responses, rather than a metaphoric bridge to related associations. The poets speculated that this was a result of students' lack of experience in making such connections as well as their limited ability in the use of the English language.

In the classroom, attention was given to structure and techniques of poetry. In the Gallery, objects substituted for conventional poetic models; lessons emphasized expressive aspects, the focus being on students communicating their observations and feelings. One poet stated that intermingling art and poetry sparked ideas for less "bookish" lessons, helped generate ideas from students, and moved poetry beyond the realm of "language skills." She observed: "An extended language program that alternates between the gallery and the classroom, as this did, is ideal. The individuality of the Gallery offsets the routine of the classroom; the order of the classroom offsets the distractions of the Gallery."

The poets concurred that judgments of which students benefited "most" and "least" are relative, not only in comparison with each other, but also in assessing students. The most proficient students learned that they could express themselves in original and inventive work that was accepted and admired. One poet noted that in each class there were a few students who seemed espe-

cially gifted. The other identified certain sixth graders as gaining a new understanding of the structural elements of poetry and the difference between poetry and prose.

For students who had difficulty in regular English lessons, poetry sessions offered a feeling of potential and success. With continual assurance of "no right or wrong," students learned they could put their experiences on paper, making them come alive for others. In seeing their mimeographed poems, reading them aloud, and listening to others, they benefited from a growing self-confidence and respect for the efforts of their peers.

Those judged to have benefited the least were students for whom English was a second language and, therefore, they experienced great difficulties in oral and written work. Due to class size and time limitation, these students unfortunately received insufficient individual attention. In working with students with limited English and from different backgrounds, one poet characterized as "insurmountable" the following problems: (a) the polylingual composition of the classes, which would have necessitated presenting the lessons in all languages; (b) the inability of many ESL students to write in English, which meant teaching English along with poetry; (c) the use of a phonetic "system" by non-native English speakers, unable to write even simple English words. As an outcome, the time given for individualized instruction of ESL students considerably reduced the amount of critical guidance initially intended for the entire class. To compensate, more detailed comments were written on the poems of competent students. Basically, the problem was one of dealing with a heterogeneous class of too many students (thirty-five) in too little time.

Art educators' criteria for assessing student work during the guided tours included: (1) the students' abilities to associate concepts and vocabulary with observed objects and to describe similarities and differences in work previously viewed and (2) the extent to which a student's responses reflected his or her feelings and emotions (comparable to the poet's criterion of individual personality or "voice"). Criteria used in the Gallery were similar to those in the classroom: (1) students' visual recall of details and clarity of description of art objects and (2) statements of personal preference toward a given object or exhibition with qualified explanations. Criteria for

One teacher noted that several students with behavioral problems, requiring physical isolation in the classroom, participated intensely in the art experiences.

"hands-on" explorations concerned the process rather than the product of students' efforts and were considered in terms of emotional involvement, departure from stereotyped responses, openness to exploration away from predictable solutions, and students' expectations and values of their own production.

Art educators found students "equally productive" in the Gallery and classroom but noted certain differences. The Gallery offered an immediacy of images that encouraged careful observation and the opportunity for small group interaction. The larger space of the Gallery allowed for alternate modes of responding through movement, role playing, and self-guided tours. The classroom provided a more controlled setting that helped focus attention without the occasional distractions of the Gallery. Of all the art components, students were most eager to participate in the "hands-on" explorations conducted in the classroom. Student evaluations revealed that of those who did not particularly enjoy viewing and discussing art, a large number found creating their own work more appealing.

Both art educators agreed that students who gained the most were high achievers in academic areas and/or those who had previous exposure to the arts (for example, from their parents or private classes). One art educator suggested that these students were highly motivated because this program gave them an opportunity to express visual and verbal skills frequently overlooked in other aspects of the curriculum. Like the poets, she also identified students who were "academically" unsuccessful in traditional curricula but were "emotionally sensitive and expressive" in this program. Such responses were attributed to an atmosphere of acceptance not necessarily present in a skills-oriented curriculum as well as to the imaginative and divergent thinking that was encouraged. One teacher noted that several students with behavioral problems, requiring physical isolation in the classroom, participated intensely in the art experiences. These students often remained after lessons to satisfy some point of curiosity. Teachers reported that students who rarely talked or participated in other lessons would talk about art.

Students who appeared to have benefited least were those with limited English facility and limited capacity for

risk taking. One art educator commented that despite their limitations, students were exposed to new vocabulary, increased their reading skills, and enhanced their self-concept through the tangible shaping of art forms. She characterized "least" as the "most deceptive aspect of evaluation" if judgments were predicated solely on verbal responses. Many students absorbed experiences, developed significantly in their aesthetic responses, and yet were reluctant to give verbal evidence to that effect. This "covert growth" was corroborated by parents who reported that at home their children "instructed" the family about art and even took them to the Gallery!

The teachers experienced the project both as students and as teachers, noting changes in their own responses as participants as well as in the performance of their students. While evaluation questions were similar to those of the poets and art educators, the questions also reflected this two-fold participation. The teachers attributed most benefits to themselves and their students to the guidance and insights of the art educators and acknowledged an awareness of new techniques and skills from the poetry sessions.

All considered visual images to be especially valuable for students at these grade levels, serving as "concrete objects to see or touch," leading to more abstract description or comparison in poetry. One stated that "students of this age do not witness, observe, and study objects unless given the opportunity to do so." A teacher of an articulate sixth grade class suggested, however, that the approach was "too broad and abstract" for most students and noted the need for "more visuals in the classroom with more concrete verbal examples of transforming visual to poetic forms." For all, slides in the classroom and objects in the Gallery proved stimulating sources for students who had difficulty beginning to write. One teacher commented that both observing visuals and manipulating media are a necessary "starting point" before students can move on to more abstract processes.

Teachers stated that learning experiences in the arts are cognitive and affective, that is, acquiring a knowledge of concepts and vocabulary and expressing appreciation and value judgments. In the visual arts, the teachers reported that initially most students were reluctant to speak and their comments "lacked depth and insight";



Colored paper collage, by Jenny Sherwood, sixth grade

As a follow-up to the exhibition of large paper cut-out paintings by artist Guy Williams, students were asked to make collages using geometric and/or free form shapes. During this classroom lesson the art educator asked students to "arrange the shapes in such a way as to create a sense of balance and visual direction for the viewer. For added interest, you might divide the background into areas of different color." (Courtesy of the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery)

however, under the guidance of the art educator, the students became more vocal and expressed more concrete abilities (confirmed in the poets' evaluations). Students showed increased self-confidence in both speaking and writing as a result of receiving positive responses to their comments. One teacher noted that her students "developed into sensitive writers — the best ever; even the ESL did well."

Teachers' judgments of which students derived most or least from the program largely reflected those of the poets and art educators. Two teachers identified a "middle group," however, with different levels of performance: one found that such students "remained the same with little improvement"; the other, that these students were able to "experience more art and poetry," even with limited participation in poetry discussions. Two other teachers maintained that "all benefited." One ascribed this to the various activities of the program, which allowed different students to feel successful. The other observed that students who were less verbal gained verbal skills and those who were learning English were able to use visual imagery to make the transition to English; therefore, "all could strengthen their creativity."

A questionnaire was verbally administered to all students. Findings revealed little difference in response by grade levels; rather, in each class, there were students of varying maturity, competence, and receptiveness. To the question, "How did the art work in the Gallery give you

For students deficient in English, visual imagery may avail more ways of expressing their thoughts and emotions because the immediacy of tangible objects offers greater accessibility than the more abstract nature of words.

ideas for your poetry?" students replied, "They gave me ideas because we could see it instead of thinking of it in our minds." "They were openings to new ideas." "What you actually see, you want to write." In answer to "Do you feel more confident writing poetry now than when you first began this program?" students said, "I have more experience." "Didn't know what poetry really was." When the same question referred to looking at and talking about art, they responded, "I've learned how to look at art better." "It seems there are no wrong answers." As to where they enjoyed writing poetry most, in the classroom or the Gallery, students' responses were equally divided: "In the Gallery, because you can see the sculpture you want to write about." "You get the feel of what you write about." "You can relax and write on the floor." "In the classroom because it was quieter." "We didn't have to walk." "I could concentrate better."

Recommendations

The polylingual character of the student population presented unanticipated problems in regard to poetry. At midpoint, for example, one fourth grade class was replaced because of its exceptionally high percentage (forty-four percent) of ESL students. Four teachers indicated that limited English speakers had difficulty with writing, as they had to deal with virtually three languages — their mother tongue, standard English, and the abstraction of poetry. Since this population mix is becoming more typical of public schools, museum-school programs involving language must take this into account.

Differing solutions were offered by the poets. Both agreed that students with language proficiency should be separated from those without, requiring different considerations of the teaching-learning process. One poet, while finding students with ability in all grades, suggested that such a project might be more functional for sixth graders. The other observed that the program was suitable for students at all grade levels given certain modifications of time and scheduling. For both poets, one and one-half hour poetry sessions were insufficient for both discussion and writing. This suggests more time is needed in and out of formal poetry sessions.

Within the sessions, certain options are available: (1) a larger block of time could be allotted for the whole

A firm grounding, therefore, must be established in art and poetry as unique forms of communicating thought and feeling before asking students to interrelate them.

group or the class could be divided into two groups, one remaining with the teacher and the other working separately with the poet; (2) smaller groups of similar aptitude could work on aspects of the poetic process under the roving supervision of the poet, thus allowing students to work at their own pace; (3) participation could be based purely on interest, which would inevitably involve fewer students. Beyond these sessions, students could complete assignments at home or under a teacher's guidance. This would encourage a continuity of ideas and allow students time to contemplate and seize upon their own experiences as subjects for poetry.

Students were more receptive to the art experiences. Through the guided participatory tours, the visual images generated an enthusiasm strong enough to overcome language barriers. From their desire to communicate discoveries, the students grappled harder to find the words. For students deficient in English, visual imagery may avail more ways of expressing their thoughts and emotions because the immediacy of tangible objects offers greater accessibility than the more abstract nature of words.

As mentioned at the beginning, periodic workshops were scheduled among the project director, art educators, poets, and teachers to review the program and to help the eight teachers make connections between their own curricula and the project. At midsemester, however, teachers were reluctant to participate in further workshops due to increasing demands upon their teaching time. The resultant scheduling difficulties and discontinuity between the project components indicates the need to maintain such sessions. Further, in integrating the learning of art and poetry, the findings revealed a disparity in concept and approach among the art educators and poets and between the poets themselves. This may be partly attributed to the idiosyncratic nature of teaching in the arts and partly to the differences inherent in these forms. There was cohesion between the art educators, however, since a prior working relationship in the pilot project had provided a unified philosophical outlook and mode of teaching. Differences in the poets' approaches were evidenced in teaching styles and expectations. One weighted more toward lecture than open dialogue at a level too abstract for most students. The

other was less didactic, encouraging more open responses geared to the interests and intellect of individuals. This inconsistency may also reflect that the art educators were working in their area of expertise, whereas the poets had to make the transition to a form and method in which they were less familiar. A future project might consider a more in-depth orientation for art educators and poets together and for the poets by themselves to assess the concepts underlying such an interrelationship.

One poet raised the issue that the similarities between art forms cannot be reduced to a technical relationship of line, rhythm, shape, and texture, but that within each, the emotional association of the total image must be found before there are attempts to dissect its components. A firm grounding, therefore, must be established in art and poetry as unique forms of communicating thought and feeling before asking students to interrelate them. This structure could be helpful as well for ESL students in light of their language difficulties.

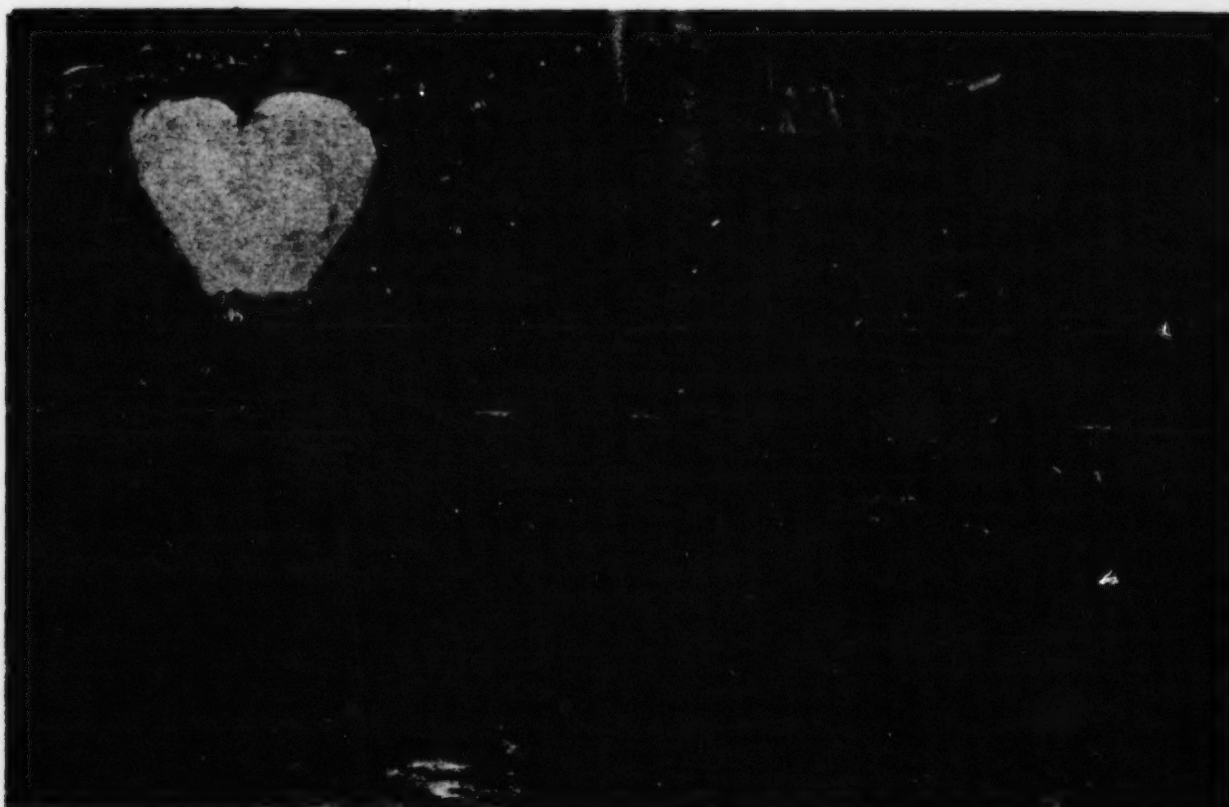
An assessment of this project as the test of the interrelationship of poetry and painting cannot be narrowly interpreted because of the linguistic factors and other conditions identified above. Nevertheless, there was general consensus among teachers, art educators, and poets that perceiving and making visual images were especially valuable for upper elementary students in providing a common visual experience and stimulating more abstract descriptions in poetry. Perhaps as significant, students were offered alternative modes of expression in an atmosphere of acceptance not always present in a traditional curriculum. In the process, they learned about language, the arts, and themselves.

Notes

1. Geraldine Dimondstein, *Exploring the Arts with Children* (New York: Macmillan, 1974).
2. Robert Stake, ed., *Evaluating the Arts in Education: A Responsive Approach* (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, 1975).
3. *Poetry in the Gallery, A Handbook for Educators* is available at the cost of \$7.50. Included are several lesson plans, children's poetry and drawings, and an abstract of the evaluation. Interested readers should write to the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery Associates, 4804 Hollywood Blvd., Los Angeles, California 90027.

Lesson Plans
and
Related Poetry

In relation to the
Marvin Harden exhibit



Juliet Cleere
Sixth Grade

March, 1982

ART LESSON IN THE CLASSROOM

I. OBJECTIVES:

- To review the terms "abstract" and "realistic."
- To define a series.
- To evaluate how different forms, colors, shapes and their organization express something (e.g. a feeling, a concept) in a non-literal way.
- To evaluate the evolution of a realistic, objective representation of an image to a more abstract form.

II. MATERIALS:

- pencils
- rulers
- newspaper
- 12" x 18" sheets of white construction paper
- crayons, chalk, oil pastels
- watercolor markers

III. PROCEDURE:

- 1) Review difference between abstract/realistic image.
(Display prints of still life by Matisse and abstract by Kandinsky.)
"LAST TIME WE BEGAN BY DISCUSSING THESE TWO IMAGES. WHAT ARE SOME SIMILARITIES/DIFFERENCES YOU NOTICE ABOUT THEM?"
- 2) Discuss Series: "GIVE ME AN EXAMPLE OF A TELEVISION SERIES YOU WATCH. DOES THE CAST OF MAIN CHARACTERS CHANGE OR REMAIN THE SAME FROM WEEK TO WEEK? WHAT ABOUT THE STORY? SERIES IN ART IS VERY MUCH LIKE A T.V. SERIES. WHEN AN ARTIST CREATES A SERIES OF PHOTOGRAPHS, PAINTINGS ETC., S/HE REPEATS THE SAME THEME. IN WHAT WAYS CAN AN ARTIST TELL A DIFFERENT STORY ABOUT THE SAME SUBJECT?"
 - "WHO REMEMBERS THE NAME OF AN ARTIST WE'VE DISCUSSED RECENTLY, WHO CREATES WORK IN A SERIES?"
 - "WHAT WAS ONE THEME YOU REMEMBER MARVIN HARDEN REPEATING IN HIS WORK?"
- 3) Slide Presentation and Discussion:
 - A) "Photo of Warhol with Silkscreen," Andy Warhol, 20th Century.
 - "WHAT'S SIMILAR ABOUT THIS SERIES OF IMAGES? WHAT'S DIFFERENT ABOUT THEM? HOW DOES THE ARTIST TELL US A DIFFERENT STORY ABOUT EACH IMAGE?"
 - "WHAT ARE YOUR FEELINGS ABOUT SOMEONE WHO LOOKS LIKE THIS IN COMPARISON TO THIS (refer to two separate images of Warhol)?"
 - "WHICH OF THESE IMAGES SEEMS MOST REALISTIC?"
 - "EVEN THOUGH THE SUBJECT IS THE SAME, WHAT DID THE ARTIST DO TO CREATE THE DIFFERENT FEELINGS/PERSONALITIES YOU'VE IMAGINED ABOUT HIM?"
 - B) "Red Tree," 1908, "Blue Tree," 1908-09, "Gray Tree," 1912, Piet Mondrian
 - "WHAT SIMILARITIES DO YOU NOTICE ABOUT THE IMAGES IN THIS SERIES?"

- "MONDRIAN WAS A DUTCH PAINTER, WHO, IN HIS EARLIER WORKS, TENDED TO USE THE IMAGE OF TREES IN MANY OF HIS PAINTINGS. IT'S EVEN BELIEVED THAT HE GOT THE IDEAS FOR THESE PAINTINGS FROM THE SAME TREE. IN MONDRIAN'S TREE SERIES WE HAVE THE SAME SUBJECT REPEATED BUT WHAT DOES HE DO TO TELL US A DIFFERENT 'STORY' ABOUT EACH IMAGE?"
- ("Red Tree") "DO YOU THINK THIS IMAGE COMES FROM WHAT THE ARTIST IS ACTUALLY SEEING? IS IT A REALISTIC IMAGE? WHAT MAKES IT REALISTIC OR UNREALISTIC?"
- ("Blue Tree") "WHAT ARE SOME DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THIS TREE AND THE 'RED TREE'? DOES IT SEEM MORE OR LESS REALISTIC?"
- ("Gray Tree") "DO YOU THINK THE ARTIST WAS CONCERNED WITH MAKING THIS TREE REALISTIC?"
- "IN EACH OF THESE IMAGES THE ARTIST WAS EXPERIMENTING WITH A TOTALLY DIFFERENT WAY OF PAINTING (i.e. progression from realism to abstraction). ARTISTS OFTEN CREATE WORK IN A SERIES TO EXPAND ON OR IMPROVE THEIR TECHNIQUE OR TO EXPERIMENT WITH DIFFERENT STYLES."

IV. PROJECT:

- "SELECT EITHER A FAVORITE OBJECT, AN ABSTRACT SHAPE OR A REALISTIC SHAPE. DRAW IT FOUR DIFFERENT WAYS, CHANGING THE 'PERSONALITY' OR 'MOOD' OF THE IMAGE EACH TIME."
- Encourage students to either: a) alter the form of their subject by making it more abstract or realistic; or b) repeat the subject using different colors to suggest various moods.

I. OBJECTIVES:

- To review the concept of series in art.
- To review the notion of a symbol.
- To use Marvin Harden's painting series, "Passage Through Gap" as symbolic material for poems describing different moods of the imagination.

II. MATERIALS:

Model poems by poet Kita Shantiris: "Good Morning" and "Brat Afternoon" (see page 16).

III. PROCEDURES:

1) Motivation:

A) Discuss concept of a Series:

- Monet's landscapes: the same location painted over and over showing the different qualities of light at various times of day.
- Television Series: same family in different situations.
- Referring to Marvin Harden's images: "WHAT STAYS THE SAME AND WHAT CHANGES IN THE PAINTINGS IN THIS ROOM?"

B) Discuss Symbols: Use flash card with definition of Symbol (something that stands for something else, especially for its mood, spirit or personality).

- "WHAT SHAPE IS IN THE CENTER OF THESE PAINTINGS (Harden's 'Passage Through Gap' Series)?"
- "WHAT MIGHT IT STAND FOR OR BE A SYMBOL OF?"

2) Discuss writing assignment:

- "IMAGINE THAT THESE PAINTINGS STAND FOR THE IMAGINATION ON DIFFERENT DAYS -- FOR ITS DIFFERENT MOODS -- AND THAT THE 'GAP' IS THE OPENING WHERE OUR IMAGINATION COMES IN TO US AND THAT THE 'SURROUND' IS OUR STUDIO AND ITS MOOD."
- "DISCUSS DIFFERENT WAYS OUR IMAGINATION BEHAVES ON DIFFERENT DAYS. HOW MIGHT ONE COMMUNICATE THAT USING COLOR, LINE AND TEXTURE?"
- "DESCRIBE COLOR, LINE AND TEXTURE OF YOUR IMAGINATION ON A DAY WHEN NO IDEAS COME, WHEN SILLY IDEAS COME, WHEN GLOOMY IDEAS COME."
- "FOCUS ON ONE PAINTING AND ASK: WHAT IS THE MOOD AND THE IMAGINATION OF THE PAINTER CONVEYED IN THIS IMAGE? WHAT WAS IT THE ARTIST DID TO MAKE YOU SAY THAT?" (As reminders, display cards with the following words written on them: TEXTURE, THICKNESS, STROKES, MOVEMENT, LINES, SHAPES AND FREE FORMS, COLOR, SPACE, CONTRAST.)

3) Introduce model poems: "I WROTE TWO POEMS AFTER LOOKING AT TWO DIFFERENT PAINTINGS BY HARDEN. SEE IF YOU CAN PICK A PAINTING THAT GOES WITH EACH POEM."

- 4) "WRITE A POEM CHOOSING ONE OF HARDEN'S PAINTINGS AS A SYMBOL OF YOUR IMAGINATION'S MOOD. SOME DETAILS TO LOOK FOR ARE: TEXTURE, THICKNESS, STROKES, MOVEMENT, LINES, SHAPES AND FREE FORMS, SPACE, COLOR, CONTRAST. DESCRIBE THEM WITH SPECIAL AND EXCITING WORDS. YOU MIGHT WANT TO:

- "DESCRIBE THE OUTER PART OF THE PAINTING, THE PART THAT SURROUNDS THE SMALLER RECTANGLE. FOCUS ON THE CENTER RECTANGLE. CAN YOU GET THROUGH IT TO YOUR IMAGINATION OR CAN YOUR IMAGINATION COME IN? IF NOT, WHAT BLOCKS IT?"
- "LOOK AT THE EDGES OF THE OPENING AND THE OPENING ITSELF FOR DETAILS."

"DO YOU AND YOUR IMAGINATION FINALLY GET TOGETHER? WHAT HAPPENS?"

MODEL POEMS

By

Kita Shantiris

GOOD MORNING

My bedroom is brushed (stroke)
in streaming whites, (movement and color)
in skinny sunlines (thickness and line)
quick as my first stretches. (speed)

Its window is clear as water. (color and shape)
My imagination sidestrokes in
feeding me ideas
that snap, crackle, and pop
for breakfast.

BRAT AFTERNOON

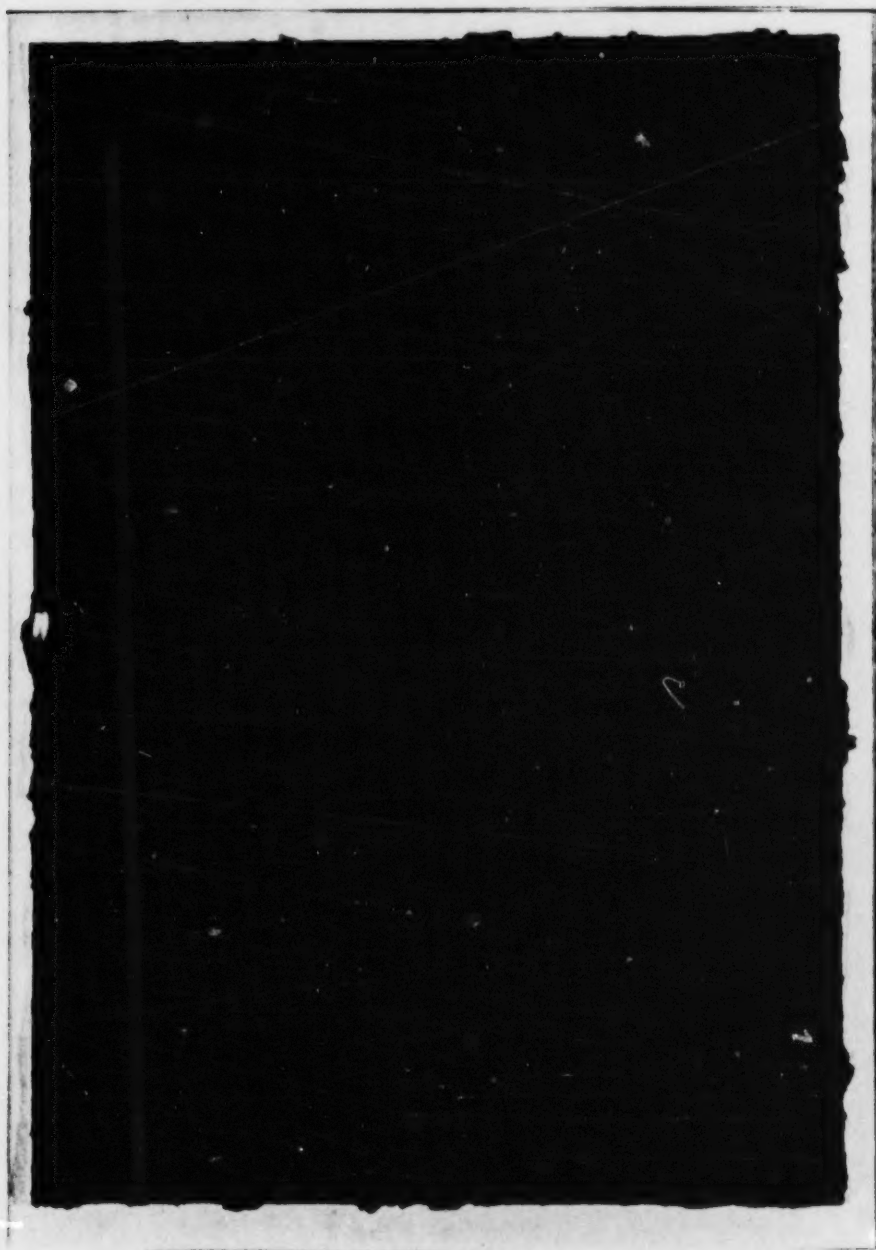
Rough as a frog in mud, (texture)
my imagination is grumpy.

The door to it (shape)
is swampy-brown and slopped. (color and shape)

It told me to get lost
It needs a nap.

Through that sandpaper crack (texture and shape)
I hear it snoring.

INSPIRED BY PAINTINGS BY MARVIN HARDEN



THE PASSAGE TO DEATH

My imagination tells me death is coming.
Doomsday in a dead river
flowing until it stops and dies out.
My imagination seems to say, "Come into my passage."
But in that deep dark passage
is the fatigued feeling of death.
The rough black is demolishing and jagged,
smoggy gray seems to choke and lead me in.
The thickly smooth texture seems to say something
as it slowly gets smaller and smaller.

--Anthony Prado
Sixth Grade

THE LAST WAY

Like the end of the world
Nothing else to live for
No breeze No life except for people
who have managed to survive.

The sun is now a
dark rusty color
The sky a light deadening force
Only one entrance out of
the dying world
The way lies below the swamps
where a force lives to kill.

The sun slowly falling never to
be seen again.
Only evidence remains
ruins that were once beautiful

The world is doomed
soon just a black star lost
in space.

-- Jenny Sherwood
Sixth Grade

Rough as a wild dog
my imagination took me like
a streak of lightning through
a place no one had ever seen
I took my imagination
I went with it as far
as I could go

-- Rhonda Mazariegos
Fifth Grade

Dark as a tunnel
rough as a porcupine
Thick like a pig
looking for a
a way to find my imagination
trying to catch it
caught it

-- Steve Skara
Fifth Grade

THE LAKE

The arrow points
to the thing that wakes me up.
The color makes me want to fall free
and die.
The stick, I use it against the night.
It is as though God brought Noah
 to life.
It makes creases for me to fall through.
The shape is like a folding sponge
 that cries.

I'll have to leave my lake
to go to the great lakes in the sky!

-- Sonya Long
Sixth Grade

In the mountains of my mind
my imagination tumbles
like a dark blue waterfall
as I look for rainbow trout.

--Nathan Snook
Sixth Grade

A BORING DAY

Thick as a globby
lake or a thick
forest. Walking
through crackling
leaves, like walking
through a bowl of
corn flakes without
milk. You look like
chewed-up mint
bubble gum on the
damp dirt ground.
I want to pick you
up and mold you into
clay. You are cool and
fresh on hot summer
days. You have lines
on your side that
were made with
a tip of a golden
star.

-- Stephanie Smith
Fourth Grade

April, 1982

I. OBJECTIVES:

- To review the notion of a symbol.
- To review the concept of visual art as a communication of thought and feeling.
- To translate artists' visual communication and students' observations into poetic expression.

II. PROCEDURES:

- 1) Review and reinforce concepts from previous lesson:
 - A) Students read aloud selected poems written at the previous poetry session.
 - B) Discuss Marvin Harden's paintings as symbols of the imagination.
- 2) Motivation: Discuss students' attitudes about Los Angeles.

"HOW DOES IT FEEL TO LIVE IN L.A.? HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE L.A. TO SOMEONE? ARE THERE THINGS YOU ESPECIALLY LIKE OR DISLIKE ABOUT L.A.?"
- 3) "THESE PAINTINGS ARE BY LOS ANGELES ARTISTS. IMAGINE THAT THEY ARE SYMBOLS OF LOS ANGELES. TAKE TEN MINUTES TO LOOK AT THE PAINTINGS. WHEN WE RECONVENE, I WILL ASK FOR VOLUNTEERS TO DISCUSS WHAT THESE PAINTINGS COMMUNICATE ABOUT THIS CITY. FIND TWO PAINTINGS WHICH COMMUNICATE SOMETHING YOU LIKE OR DISLIKE ABOUT L.A. BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS HOW THE ARTIST ACCOMPLISHES THIS. FOR EXAMPLE, SOMEONE MAY SAY THAT 'APARTMENT GATE' REMINDS THEM OF LONELINESS IN THE CITY OR OF THE DANGER ONE FEELS IN EMPTY PLACES."
- 4) Writing Assignment: Each student will write their own two-part poem inspired by paintings which communicate something they like and dislike about Los Angeles. They will use the titles of the paintings as titles of the poems if they wish.

INSPIRED BY
L.A. ART: AN EXHIBITION OF CONTEMPORARY PAINTINGS

APARTMENT GATE

Los Angeles you remind me of
my mother locking
me up in the bathroom.

-- April Friga
Fourth Grade

Los Angeles, you are a world of mazes.
Streets. No way out. You are scared
and lonely. Mind boggling streets.
People chase you with guns and knives.
Be careful, one mistake could be
Your last in Los Angeles.

PALETTE

Los Angeles, confetti streamers and
bits of paper in: parades, parties,
and weddings. Cake and ice cream
to eat. Soda to drink. Everyone having
fun and playing games. Everyone
has fun.

-- Chris Pisano
Fourth Grade

MEDUSA

Los Angeles, your nights
are filled with violence
Streets dim with hidden
fears scattered from
Crimes mingle from block
to block
I'll never feel safe in your
thundering streets

-- Rowena Nerry
Sixth Grade

GEBO

A city floating in space
A shadow in paradise
A city waiting to float out to sea.

-- Michael Luckerman
Sixth Grade

SUSAN ROGERS

L.A. you remind me of the hospitals.
Faces with that solemn look --
faraway eyes peering
into nowhere.
It's sad and
sort of
scary.
They seem to plead
with their glassy eyes that
never move from the
far away window looking
down in the city of
Los Angeles.

-- Justine Armandaz
Sixth Grade

I. OBJECTIVE:

- To emphasize the writing of work which is not in direct response to a particular structure or poetic structure.

II. PROCEDURE:

- 1) Using the visual images in the exhibit as a stimulus, tell students to walk through the gallery, observe the work, and write down questions they can think of that no one else could possibly answer.
- 2) After ten minutes, have students reconvene to share their questions with the class. Encourage them to listen carefully to each other and write down one or two other possibilities for questions they might like to respond to in their writing.
- 3) Writing assignment: Students write the answers to one of their selected questions.

INSPIRED BY
L.A. ART: AN EXHIBITION OF CONTEMPORARY PAINTINGS

In the dim of the
night
In the middle of
the storm
As glittering snakes
slither through
the cold and glossy
color of the
once beautiful green
green grass
only their copper
spinning scales
can reveal
how it once was glow-
ing in the midst
of cool September
The owls hooted
the coyotes howled
and the snakes
scampered about
in the mud of
raindrops
But still the thunder
roared and the
lightning flashed
as the mean
clouds still rolled
along with no
attempt to give
up against day-
light

-- Aleli Orajalo
Sixth Grade

Evil eyes reflected
through the window.
Kerosene boxes ---
---opened---
The magnifying
glass lay on
the floor.
Struggling to
unlatch the
knob
those evil eyes
peered through
the window
one tin kerosene can
---dripped---
The bear lay
---wet---
The sun shone
on the magnifying
glass.
The magnifying glass lay on
the bear.
Smoke filled the room
The eyes squinted
as if they were
proud.

-- Linda Vitsut
Sixth Grade

The Universe itself
does not
have an end
It's your imagination
when you think of the sky or the stars at night
as 40 feet
away.

-- Varuzhan Minasian
Fifth Grade

Why does rain pour?
Rain pours because people cry
Because hate surrounds us
Rain pours because people exist
Because dreams collect
Rain pours because we make it pour.

Why do we hate?
We hate because there is too much of everything
We hate because reality doesn't exist
We hate because love grows weak
We hate because people die
We hate because our dreams disappear
Because no one cares...

Why do questions have answers?
Questions have answers because dreams
come true
Dreams come true because rain pours
Rain pours because there are stars in
the sky
There are stars in the sky because we grow old
We grow old because we love
to hate
We hate because we exist
We exist because questions
have answers

--Evangeline Domanay
Sixth Grade

Lines from a pencil make the lines
up and down.
Words from writing with a pen or pencil go
up and down.
Moving your hand
up and down.
The lines on a piece of bark are
up and down.
The moving of the hand makes the paintbrush go
up and down.
The color yellow goes slowly
up and down.
A wrinkle going
up and down,
on a dress with a girl jumping
up and down,
in the dress making hundred more wrinkles
going up and down.
Strands of hair on the girl jumping
up and down,
Making each strand of hair go
up and down,
Each line made in a leaf are veins that go
up and down.

-- Rachel Barish
Fourth Grade

May, 1982

ART LESSON IN THE CLASSROOM

I. OBJECTIVES:

- To view and discuss non-figurative sculpture using non-traditional materials.
- To list materials used in traditional sculpture (metal, wood, clay, plastic, and marble).
- To observe that sculpture can also be molded or assembled from pre-formed materials and found objects.
- To discuss the idea that any observable object can become the image for a sculpture (toothpaste tube, hamburger, pencil).
- To discuss slides of contemporary sculpture with reference to "Painted Sculpture" exhibit.

II. MATERIALS:

Print: Henry Moore, Madonna and Child

Slides of the following artists' works:

- Christo, "Wrapped Wheelbarrow & Package"
"Oil Drum Wall"
- Jasper Johns
- Louise Nevelson
- Claes Oldenberg, "Two Cheeseburgers with Everything"
"Toothpaste Tube"
"Soft Telephone"
"Light Switch"
"Popsicle"
"Baked Potato"
- Picasso, "Violin"
"Woman with Baby Carriage"
"Baboon with Child"
- Rauschenberg
- paint
- glue
- plywood (bases for sculptures)

III. PROCEDURE:

- 1) Review previous lesson in figurative sculpture. Discuss "Madonna and Child" by Moore by involving students in the game "TEN." Distribute ten cards numbered one through ten. Student with #1 card begins by describing one aspect of the sculpture, i.e. theme, mood, surface treatment, scale, narrative quality, line, shape or social commentary. Then student #2 comments on another characteristic not previously mentioned. If a quality is repeated, students raise their hands and the person has to think of another idea. After the tenth student, everyone shares any additional comments.

- 2) Discuss 20th century sculpture and its evolvement from using "traditional" materials to incorporating found objects.

"WHAT HAPPENED IN MODERN TIME WITH SCULPTORS IS THAT THEY ASKED, 'WHY CAN'T WE DO OTHER THINGS IN OUR SCULPTURES BECAUSE SCULPTURE IS JUST ABOUT SHAPES?' AND SO THEY BEGAN TO LOOK AROUND IN THEIR LIVES AND SAY, 'THAT'S AN INTERESTING SHAPE.' PLAIN ORDINARY THINGS AROUND THEM LIKE A TELEPHONE, SHOES, CLOTHING, PENCILS, MIGHT BE AN IDEA FOR A SCULPTURE. THEY ALSO DECIDED, WHY SHOULD THEY HAVE TO GET A BIG PIECE OF CLAY OR STEEL OR WOOD AND CARVE THE OBJECT? WHY NOT JUST GET A BUNCH OF JUNK AND PILE IT TOGETHER TO MAKE THE SHAPE OF WHAT THEY WANT?"

"BUT SOME ARTISTS DIDN'T LIKE THE NAME 'JUNK SCULPTURE', FEARING THAT SOME PEOPLE WOULD THINK IT MEANT 'JUNKY' SCULPTURE, SO THEY CALLED IT 'FOUND-OBJECT' SCULPTURE. THIS MEANS THEY GO OUT, THEY FIND THINGS IN THEIR ENVIRONMENT AND THEY MAKE THEM INTO SCULPTURES."

- 3) Slide Presentation and Discussion:

Discuss slides listed above with emphasis on the following concepts:

- 1) Some artists use common objects to make sculptures.
- 2) Some artists use images of common objects for sculptures.
- 3) Some artists paint on sculptures.

- 4) Students name the most interesting piece of sculpture they saw and state why it is interesting to them.

IV. PROJECT:

Encourage students to collect common objects to combine in individual or group sculptures.

I. OBJECTIVES:

- To carefully examine an object of art (sculpture) to infer values and statements expressed by the artist.
- To review and reinforce the concept of rhythm in poetry.

II. MATERIALS:

Model poem by poet James Tate: "The Blue Booby" (see page 29).

III. PROCEDURE:

- 1) Students read aloud selected poems written at the previous poetry session.
- 2) Motivation: Discuss how traces of past civilizations provide clues about the people and culture of that time. "WE PUT ART IN A MUSEUM BECAUSE WE VALUE IT. IT REFLECTS OUR INTERESTS, HABITS AND TASTES. THE ARTIFACTS OF PAST CIVILIZATIONS REFLECT THEIR INTERESTS, HABITS AND TASTES. WHAT OBJECTS WERE FOUND IN THE PYRAMIDS AND HOW DOES THAT RELATE TO THE HABITS AND VALUES OF EGYPTIANS?" (The King Tutenkhamen Exhibit was toured and studied by most students).
- 3) Discuss writing assignment: "IMAGINE YOU ARE EXPLORERS. LOOK OVER THE SCULPTURES. SELECT ONE TO WRITE ABOUT AND EXAMINE IT CAREFULLY."
Model the writing process by asking two students to volunteer to be the "explorers." Have them select a sculpture to explore. Elicit imaginary statements about the people who left the artifact (the sculpture). "WHAT DO YOU SEE (color, texture, design, etc.)? WHO OR WHAT CAUSED IT TO BE THERE? WHEN? WHY?" Speculate about an appropriate title for a poem.

-Emphasize that there are no "right" or "wrong" answers by pointing out the various student speculations shared about the piece and the variety of viewpoints possible.
- 4) Read James Tate's "The Blue Booby" as an example of a fantasy about peculiar birds on a peculiar island with peculiar habits.
- 5) Students are given the choice to work alone or in pairs. If working with a partner, they may imagine they are "explorers" together and write their poems in alternating lines as if having a dialogue on paper.

MODEL POEM

THE BLUE BOOBY

The blue booby lives
on the bare rocks
of Galapagos
and fears nothing.
It is a simple life:
they live on fish,
and there are few predators.
Also, the males do not
make fools of themselves
chasing after the young
ladies. Rather,
they gather the blue
objects of the world
and construct from them

a nest--an occasional
Gaulois package,
a string of beads,
a piece of cloth from
a sailor's suit. This
replaces the need for
dazzling plumage;
in fact, in the past
fifty million years
the male has grown
considerably duller,
nor can he sing well.

--from a three stanza poem
by James Tate

INSPIRED BY PAINTED SCULPTURE EXHIBIT

CASTLE OF THE FUTURE

The year is 2001,
on a hill at the robot empire,
wall of natural resources,
guarded by electronic robots.
the owner is a half-witted wiz kid.

--George Stergious
Germaine Peterson
Nathan Snook
Sixth Grade

INSIDE LIFE

It seems you left
this memory because you
wanted everyone to see with what you
shared your pains, secrets and laughters too.
In this box you consoled
yourself when no one
wanted to know about your feelings.
The box helped you when you needed it.
You sat in there all alone
with no one around you.
When you left you
did not want to leave your
box but when you were mature enough
you knew someone would
admire you if you left it
as a memory of yourself.
I will always
remember what you felt
when I go in there.

-- Patricia Burgas
Fifth Grade

THE TAILS OF A VILLAIN

The tails of a villain
sharper than a knife
sharp as an angry temper.
The tails of a villain
3 steps and there
you meet them.
The tails of a villain
lifeless, useless, full
of dullness,

Stubs of anger
Stubs of hate
Oh tails of a villain
You're meaner than
I thought.

--Susan Kim
Fifth Grade

THE BURIED CIVILIZATION

The outer part of this object looks like a tomb with unusual brushstrokes.
The upper part is like a tool to make a teepee.
The beige part of the object is like an outer part to support the teepee.
Inside the tomb lies the body of an ancient Chief.
Beside the Chief lies the needs for his future world.
On top of the supplies stands a live companion to guard the royal Chief's body.
In his future world there is a difficulty he must face.
His difficulty is to prove himself worthy of his occupation as a chief
to enter the royal world of luxury.

-- Grace Hu
Hayganoush Fermanian
Marleen Sebetich
Sixth Grade



Jennifer Taggart
Sixth Grade

Some More Poems...

INSPIRED BY PAINTINGS FROM FREDERICK S. WIGHT
EXHIBITION

THE BIGGEST MOUNTAIN

It is as slippery
as an iceberg.
Its shape is like a crushed
hat.
It looks taller
than its own
shadow.
It feels as cold as a freezer at
its coldest.
I wish I could
go to the peak
and stay there
forever.

--Albert Valencia
Fourth Grade

Winter is a dream
covered by white light.
It flows with a dove
gliding within your
world.
In which the ocean is
calm and the mountains
are without motion.

--Rhoniel Manlapaz
Sixth Grade

The palm tree is like a line of hard and still smoke.

--Rodney Lee
Fourth Grade

PAPER

Paper is like something
from outerspace--
It has no depth.
It is like a gossiping
fire, it cracks
and burns.

Paper is like your
wise person, it gives you
support when you're
expressing your ideas.

Paper is more
than just a part of
nature.

It is living.
Paper takes a lot of
abuse out here.

It mourns for its
mother, the tree
back there.

--Tracye Richardson
Sixth Grade

A waterfall is like a blanket
over the rocks
singing them to
sleep.

--Marin Pura
Sixth Grade

Leaves are like a whole religion hanging up on a tree.

--Christabelle Tabbada
Sixth Grade

INSPIRED BY PHOTOGRAPHIC PRINTS BY LARRY FRENCH

IN THE SWIMMING POOL

As they glitter like crystals
In the depth
as high and wide like Sequoia Tree
with blueberries all over

When they splash like icy raindrops
in the Artic wind
on me,
the one with peaches all over

And tastes like gold
As they swirl around me
from the window of skies
also as they sparkle into privacy

Then suddenly I see
hundreds and thousands of yellow dots
shiny like pyramids in the Ancient Egyptian sunlight

As I get the sun's gleam
they fade away slowly and slowly
like a marble Pegasus
in my new swimming pool

--Hong Joon Kim
Fifth Grade

INSPIRED BY
DRAWING BY
MARVIN HARDEN

Grayish-white
dark, lonely,
fearful, entitled cow.
In the vast
meadow, lying
under the tree above her. Peaceful,
self-centered animal. Self-
pity within
the heart of the animal.
The tree,
out looking every-
thing.
Someday, just someday
it would be
the end
of her world
she lives in...

--Evangeline Domanay
Sixth Grade

RIDDLE POEMS

They take off and land
1000 times a day like two
helicopters in downtown L.A.
They help me get around the town.
Everyone has two of them.

(feet)

-- Denny Tauber
Fourth Grade

It is right by your eye
with a tough guy in back of it.
You see 4 bombs.
They are rolled tightly.
Then you are all black and blue,
O U C H!

(fist)

--Russell Ishii
Sixth Grade

Flesh covered tools
roots that clutch
gracefully

(fingers)

--Pomare Palmer
Fifth Grade

Like a tape recorder
but you can never shut it off.
Also used for showing
affection to one or another.

(lips)

--Ethan Wilson
Fifth Grade

RHYTHM POEMS

My wolf has fur of a porcupine
With a mind from a galaxy
With ears of a sonic bat
My wolf has teeth like exploding stars
With the tongue of a dragon on Pluto
With eyes like sharp lighting in space
With a throat like a red, painful cylinder
With a nose like a dark, heated cave
My wolf has claws like C's
With legs like his heart and a quasar
My wolf has a tail of a unicorn's horn
With the strength of a thousand dinosaurs
My wolf has a heart of an exploding red star
Yet is as nice as a swan
With lungs like an expanding universe
With speed 1,000,000,000,000 the speed of light
With the force field of a hundred cranes
With blood that can dissolve anything except him
With sweat that's deadly poison
With the mind of the sun and the moon
My wolf will fly through the universe forever with me
And his name is Starbuck.

--Amy Kilbourne
Fifth Grade

My friend with hair of a burned bottle of tar,
With an appetite that is as big as his round stomach,
With the hair as wild as a wild stallion,
With dandruff that looks like snow that came down
in a blizzard,
With the mouth that works like his heart,
With a heart that works like his heart,
With a heart that works like a crosstown bus...

--Steven Lee
Fifth Grade

My bike with
 wheels of a
 one million
 horsepower dragster
 With handle bars of
 melted lightning
 My bike with the
 cranks
 which
 have the code
 of the gods
 With the frame of
 bursting
 light
 My bike with a path
 leading through
 other
 galaxies
 With the rider
 that
 is more
 powerful
 than the whole
 galactic empire
 My bike with the
 power to
 conquer
 everything
 that
 ever
 moved.

--Tim Franks
 Sixth Grade

My paper that doesn't forget anything
 My paper that you talk to every
 time you write.
 My paper that is almost a computer
 made of shining armor
 My paper's enemies are fire and
 water that turns it to ashes like
 a volcano throws ashes from its
 firing mouth
 My paper's color is like the white
 from the clouds in the enormous blue
 sky
 My paper is so light a little traveling
 wind can take
 it miles away
 from me.
 My paper that has lines so
 it can
 hold our conversation so it
 can't get away
 like a genie trapped in a
 bottle
 My paper the one that I keep
 losing every time I write
 something important
 on it and so wandering eyes see it.

--Edgar Asturias
 Sixth Grade

IMAGINARY PLACES

Am at a cemetery.
The cemetery is Forest Lawn.
Am on a mountain of grass.

Everything quiet, nobody to bore you.
Just to have a moment of peace.
I lay near my grandfather's tombstone.

I hear a noise. I stay.
I feel an arm on my shoulder.
I slowly turn. It's my grandfather.

--Luis Alvarez
Sixth Grade

Since dusk I've been here,
I've been here watching,
just watching.

The brisk white foam and deep blue
of the ocean water rises up like a giant elephant
and slowly comes down to descend back into the water.

Red and yellow sky surrounds me.
The only sound is the crashing,
the crashing of the giant monsters beating on the sand floor.

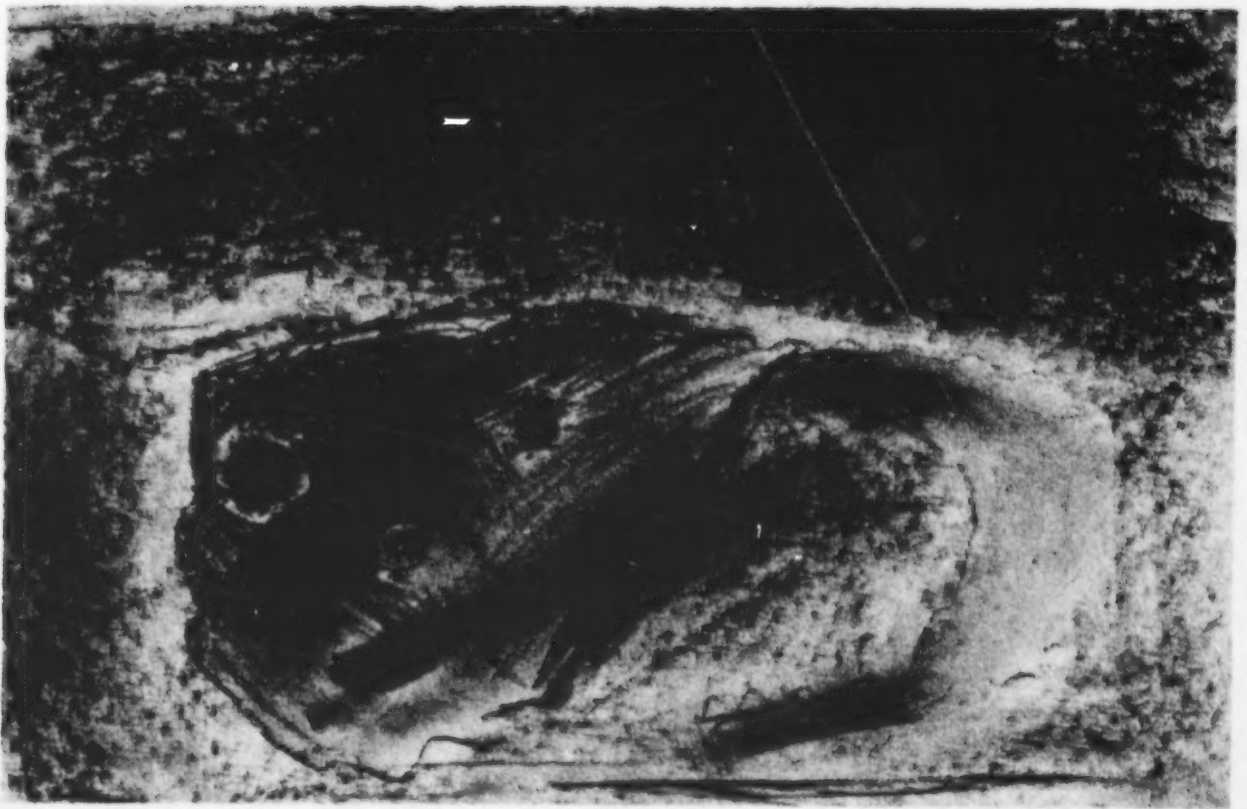
The palm trees behind me, they're whispering.
Huge eel-like strings communicating behind my back.
I slowly turn around.

The trees seem to be crying out for sun.
They slowly watch the sun go down.
The wind rustles them wildly.

The moon shines bright over the brisk
yet peaceful blue water.
All is quiet.

--Adrienne Buck
Sixth Grade

Sample
Questionnaires



Sonya Inezian
Fourth Grade

I. STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

OCTOBER, 1981

NOTE TO THE TEACHER: Please ask each student to respond to the following questions as you read each question aloud.

HAVE YOU EVER VISITED THE FOLLOWING
PLACES THAT HAVE ART OBJECTS TO LOOK AT?
(Write YES or NO)

HAVE YOU VISITED THIS PLACE MORE
THAN ONCE? LIST THE NUMBER OF
TIMES.

_____	ART MUSEUMS	_____
_____	ART GALLERIES	_____
_____	MALLS WITH ART WORKS	_____
_____	STREET EXHIBITS	_____
_____	BARNSDALL JR. ARTS CENTER	_____
_____	SCHOOL EXHIBITS	_____

OTHER: _____

ANSWER YES OR NO TO THE FOLLOWING:

- _____ 1) Have you ever listened to poetry read to you by your teacher?
- _____ 2) Have you ever listened to poetry read to you by your parents?
- _____ 3) Have you ever read poetry in school?
- _____ 4) Have you ever read poetry at home?
- _____ 5) Have you ever written poetry at school?
- _____ 6) Have you ever written poetry at home?

II. PROGRAM EVALUATION QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS

MAY, 1982

- 1) How did the work in the Gallery give you ideas for your poetry?
- 2) Do you feel more confident looking at art and talking about art than when you first began this Program?
- 3) Do you feel more confident writing poetry now than when you first began this Program?
- 4) How did you feel when you read your poems in class?
- 5) How did you feel when other students read their poems in class?
- 6) Where did you enjoy writing poetry the most - in the Gallery or classroom?

I. PROGRAM EVALUATION QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

NOVEMBER, 1981

- 1) Describe your feelings about sharing your classroom time and students with another educator.
- 2) Do you feel that the strategies used by the Art and Poet Educators are appropriate and/or effective for your students? Explain.
- 3) What benefit have you personally derived from this program?
- 4) Do you believe it is advantageous for you to attend teacher workshops in poetry and art? ☐ YES ☐ NO Why?

II. PROGRAM EVALUATION QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

FEBRUARY, 1982

- 1) Do you feel that the strategies used by the Art and Poet Educators are appropriate and/or effective for your students? Explain.
- 2) Do you feel that classroom time is being used effectively? If not, what changes would you suggest?
- 3) What benefit have you personally derived, so far, from this program?
- 4) What benefit have your students derived, so far, from this program?
- 5) Any suggestions or comments for changes or improvements in the program?

III. FINAL PROGRAM EVALUATION QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

MAY, 1982

- 1) Has your own sensitivity to the visual arts and poetry changed as a result of your participation in the program?
- 2) Do you feel that there is value in using visual images as sources for poetic expression?
- 3) Do you feel the arts have value for their own sake as sources of learning? Has your opinion changed since the beginning of this program?
- 4) How has participation affected students' attitudes about themselves?
- 5) Which students benefited from the program most? The least? To what do you attribute this?

PROGRAM EVALUATION QUESTIONS FOR ART EDUCATORS

JUNE, 1982

- 1) What criteria did you use to assess the quality of the children's responses?
- 2) What kind of imagery did the students seem to relate to the most? How did the children's responses reflect an understanding of these visual images?
- 3) Is this the first time you have worked with a large number of limited English speakers? What is your response to working with students with different language backgrounds? How did you have to modify your objectives in order to meet the needs of these students?
- 4) Where did you feel the students were more productive -- in the classroom or the Gallery?
- 5) Which students benefited from the program most? The least? To what do you attribute this?
- 6) Do you think using the visual arts as a stimuli for writing poetry was successful as carried out in the program?

PROGRAM EVALUATION QUESTIONS FOR POET EDUCATORS

JUNE, 1982

- 1) What criteria did you use to assess the quality of the children's responses?
- 2) How does the poetry reflect the visual images in the gallery exhibition? Were students able to relate the visual imagery as a source for poetry? If not, what were their sources for poetry?
- 3) Where did you feel the students were more productive -- in the classroom or the Gallery?
- 4) Which students benefited from the program most? The least? To what do you attribute this?
- 5) Is this the first time you have worked with a large number of limited English speakers? What is your response to working with students with different language backgrounds? How did you have to modify your objectives in order to meet the needs of these students?
- 6) Do you think using the visual arts as stimuli for writing poetry was successful as carried out in the program?